

of the police, has not supplied the most
probable explanation
of that dark affair."

In a letter addressed to M. Oharpentier in
August, 1889,
while he was writing " La Bete Humaine," at
Me*dan, Zola
said:

"I am working on my novel passionately
and shall certainly
have finished it by December 1. . . . I
hope to take Fasquelle¹
the first seven chapters on September 15,
in order that they may
be immediately set in type. . . . I have a
desperate desire to
finish my Eougon-Macquart series as soon
as possible. I should
like to be rid of it in January, '92. This
may be managed, but I
shall have to work very hard, I am
fortunately in a good condi-
tion for work, I enjoy the most perfect
health, and feel again
as I did when I was twenty.² . . . We shall
return to Paris on
September 10, and settle quietly in our
new quarters.³ That
will take us quite six weeks, and we
should like to be settled
before the cold weather comes. There is a
great deal to be done,
but wo shall do it leisurely, even if we have
to postpone furnish-
ing the place completely until later. In
December we shall
return to Mddan to kill the pig, and, if it
suits you, you shall
come with us.⁴ The weather here is
horrible. . . . I hope you
will have some sunshine as you havo gone
yonder [to the Eiviera]
in search of it. . . . Ah I my friend if I
were only thirty, you
should see what I would do 1 I would
stagger the world !"

It was in the spring of 1890 that "La Bete
Humaine"
appeared in volume form; and to some

